

City of Kenmore Shoreline Master Program Update



In 2003, the state legislature established funding, timelines, and guidelines requiring all cities and counties to update their local Shoreline Master Programs (SMP) prepared under Washington State Shoreline Management Act (SMA). The new shoreline guidelines passed in 2003 set a higher level of environmental protection for shorelines in the state and a goal of “no net loss” of shoreline function. The City of Kenmore is conducting a comprehensive update of its SMP with grant assistance and guidance from the State Department of Ecology. The City’s SMP provides goals, policies, development regulations, and permitting procedures for “shorelines of the state” in City jurisdiction as defined by the SMA. The update is being prepared consistent with the SMA and its implementing guidelines.

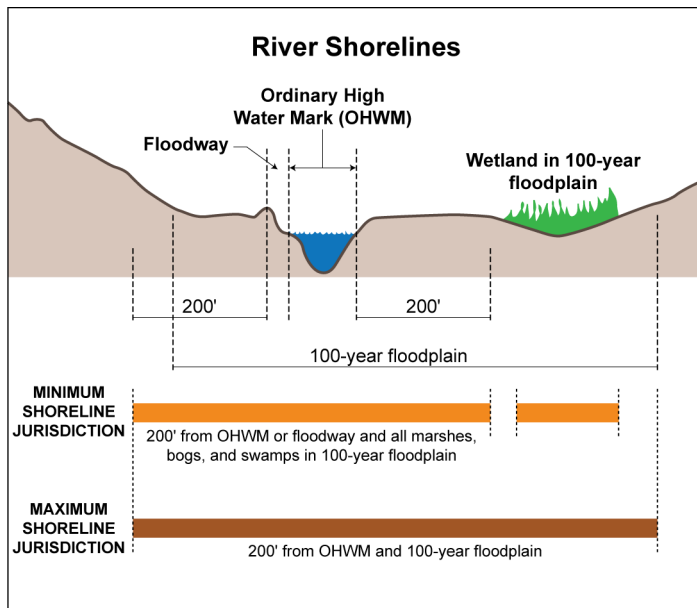
What is the Shoreline Management Act?

The Washington SMA was adopted in a 1972 referendum “to prevent the inherent harm in an uncoordinated and piecemeal development of the state’s shorelines.” The SMA has three broad policies:

1. **Encourage water-dependent and water-oriented uses:** "uses shall be preferred which are consistent with control of pollution and prevention of damage to the natural environment, or are unique to or dependent upon use of the states' shorelines...."
2. **Promote public access:** “the public’s opportunity to enjoy the physical and aesthetic qualities of natural shorelines of the state shall be preserved to the greatest extent feasible consistent with the overall best interest of the state and the people generally.”
3. **Protect shoreline natural resources,** including "...the land and its vegetation and wildlife, and the water of the state and their aquatic life...."

Where does the Shoreline Management Act apply?

Statewide, the SMA applies to marine coastal areas, all rivers and streams downstream from a point where the mean annual flow is 20 cubic feet per second or greater, and lakes over 20 acres in size. In Kenmore, this includes Lake Washington, the Sammamish River, and the main stem of Swamp Creek.



The SMA also applies to adjacent *shorelands* located 200 feet from the ordinary high water mark (measured horizontally) and associated wetlands. The SMA jurisdiction can be expanded to include the entire contiguous floodplain associated with “shorelines of the state.” In Kenmore, wetlands associated with Lake Washington, the Sammamish River, and Swamp Creek total over 172 acres. |

What does the SMP regulate?

All land use activities within the shoreline jurisdiction must meet the goals, policies, and regulations in the SMP regardless of the type of shoreline permit required. This includes include dredging or in-water structures; new buildings and structures; and land development activities such as clearing, grading, or filling.

What are the steps in the SMP update process?

The SMP update includes developing a shoreline inventory and characterization, shoreline environment designations, updated policies and regulations, and a restoration plan. It also includes involving the community to ensure the plan reflects the broad public interest in the shorelines of Kenmore.

What is the value of the Shoreline Inventory and Characterization report?

The inventory and characterization documents current shoreline conditions and provides a basis for updating the City's SMP goals, policies, and regulations. The inventory and characterization identifies existing conditions, evaluates existing functions and values of shoreline resources, and describes opportunities for conservation and restoration of ecological functions. This helps in making sound decisions on policies and regulations and also provides a baseline for comparing the success of the SMP at meeting its objectives. The first Draft Inventory is currently in review by the Technical Advisory Group, including City staff, Tribes, Ecology, and other state agencies.

What are shoreline environment designations?

Shoreline environment designations function like an additional zoning layer. Each designation permits certain uses and developments, if allowed by the underlying zoning requirements. The purpose of shoreline environment designations is to provide a uniform basis for applying policies and regulations within distinctly different shoreline areas. New environment designations will be developed by October 2008.

What polices and regulations will be changed through the SMP update?

The SMP is a local, long range plan implementing the SMA. The SMP includes goals, policies, development standards, use regulations and a permitting process for activities located within the shoreline jurisdiction. The City's current SMP was developed by King County and adopted when Kenmore was incorporated, so this will be Kenmore's first opportunity to develop shoreline polices unique to Kenmore. The City's SMP update must be consistent with State guidelines, and will be integrated with other City plans and regulations such as the Comprehensive Plan, zoning code, and critical areas regulations. All local SMPs must be reviewed and approved by the Department of Ecology. Draft regulations must be submitted to Ecology by the end of March 2009.

What is a Shoreline Restoration Plan?

The SMP guidelines require that local governments develop SMP policies that promote "restoration" of damaged shoreline ecological functions and develop a "real and meaningful" strategy to implement restoration objectives. Planning for shoreline restoration includes identifying opportunities (both programmatic and site-specific), establishing goals and policies, working cooperatively with other regional entities, and supporting restoration through other regulatory and non-regulatory programs. The City must develop a Restoration Plan by June of 2009.

Additional Information

To find out more about the City's SMP update process go to: <http://www.cityofkenmore.com/>

Questions? Please contact Jill Ding, Senior Planner, at (425) 398-8900 or email, jdging@ci.kenmore.wa.us .

Information regarding shoreline requirements and state guidance is available on the Ecology website at: <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/sea/sma/>.